

DELVE REPORT

APRIL
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SAUCERS, SPACE & SCIENCE

ABDUCTED: How People Come To Believe They Were Kidnapped By Aliens
By Susan Clancy
Harvard University Press

MICHAEL KUNZELMAN
Associated Press

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — Susan Clancy is sick of space aliens.

The Harvard psychologist figures she has read every book and seen every movie ever made about extraterrestrials, and she has interviewed roughly 50 people who claim to have been abducted by aliens.

And it's all in the name of scientific truth, not science fiction.

"I have become a reluctant scholar of alienography," Clancy said.

Clancy is bracing for a fresh round of hate mail with her new book, *Abducted: How People Come To Believe They Were Kidnapped By Aliens*.

Those who believe aliens are among us haven't taken kindly to her theory that abductees have created "false memories" out of, she writes, a "blend of fantasy-proneness, memory distortion, culturally available scripts, sleep hallucinations, and scientific illiteracy."

That doesn't mean Clancy thinks her subjects are crazy. In fact, she was surprised how many of them seemed quite normal, intelligent and articulate.

"Arguing weird beliefs is a very normal thing," she said in an interview from Nicaragua, where she is a visiting professor at INCAE, the Central American Institute for Business Administration. "It's very human for us to believe in things for which there is no scientific evidence."

When she arrived at Harvard in 1996, Clancy didn't set out to debunk the stories of little green men kidnapping people from their bedrooms and using them for painful experiments. Instead, she started her research on false memories by studying victims of sexual abuse.

She quickly found herself the target of angry "outsiders" who accused her of trying to discredit victims. One irate letter-writer called her a "friend of pedophiles everywhere."

Around the same time, Harvard Medical School started investigating the research methods employed by Pulitzer Prize-winning psychologist John Mack, who used hypnosis to retrieve memories from people who claimed to be alien abductees. (The school decided not to censure Mack, who was struck and killed by a drunk driver in London last year.)

Mack's work gave Clancy an idea: Wouldn't it be easier to test her theories if she could be certain that her subjects' memories were not real? She and her adviser, Harvard psychologist Richard McNally, placed a newspaper ad that asked, "Have you been abducted by aliens?" It took less than a day for callers to fill her voice mail.

As Clancy and McNally interviewed the abductees, they started to find some common threads. Many of them, for example, described the terrifying experience of waking up and being unable to move, certain that an intruder was lurking in their room.

To the Harvard psychologists, it was obvious that their

If this dude looks familiar to you, don't call Susan Clancy. "I'm done with aliens," the author says.

ALIEN NATION



Continued on the following page

Harvard prof incurs wrath of the believers by claiming abductions all in their heads

SUNDAY SUN **SHOWCASE** DECEMBER 18, 2005

subjects had suffered an episode of sleep paralysis — a state of limbo between sleep and being awake, sometimes punctuated by hallucinations.

"It's a little bit like a harm-cup in the brain. It's harmless," said McNally, adding that 20% of the population will experience sleep paralysis at least once.

Many of the abductees also could be described as "spiritual people" who have abandoned conventional religious beliefs, McNally added. "The people convinced of this are getting genuine spiritual payoff," he said. "To encounter a naturalistic account of it is deeply offensive."

In her book, Clancy describes her subjects' stories of abduction in detail, changing only their names.

One man, "an articulate, handsome" chiropractor with a "strikingly attractive wife" and twin sons, claimed to have fathered hybrid babies with an alien, a "streamlined, sylphlike creature."

Another subject, a 34-year-old artist with a college education, couldn't identify "disturbing sleep-related experiences" until he was hypnotized by an abduction researcher he found on the Internet. During his second hypnosis session, the artist said he recovered memories of being abducted by aliens who strapped him down on a black marble table and subjected him to a painful sexual experiment.

Clancy said a wealth of research shows that hypnosis makes it easier for people to create false memories.

"This is in large part because it both stimulates the imagination and relaxes reality constraints," she writes in her book.

However, Clancy learned

it was impossible to categorically disprove alien abductions.

"All you can do is argue that they're improbable and that the evidence adduced by the believer is insufficient to justify the belief," she wrote. "Ultimately, then, the existence of ETs is a matter of opinion, and the believers have their own opinions, based on firsthand experience."

One of those "believers" is Will Bueche, a 36-year-old who was working for Mack when Clancy and McNally interviewed him several years ago.

Bueche said he has had more than a dozen "encounters" with aliens since he was a young child. These encounters with the "pale, thin beings," he said, usually happen at night, in his room, and he feels alert but "a little bit drugged" while they communicate with him telepathically.

"It's not like they're speaking English in my mind," he said. "It's a mixture of music, pictures, feelings and impressions."

Bueche said Clancy's theories about alien abductions, including sleep paralysis, cannot fully explain what he's experienced.

"I think her book comes close to the truth in many ways, but it isn't able to see the potential out there for another breakthrough in how we see reality," he said.

"(It's a) typical debunking book. This is junk social science, and there is a certain condescending quality to it."

David Jacobs of Temple University is not amused by the author's findings.

Clancy's conclusions aren't shared by David Jacobs, an associate professor of history at Temple University. Jacobs, who teaches a class called "UFOs and American Society," said Clancy's *Abducted* is a "typical debunking book."

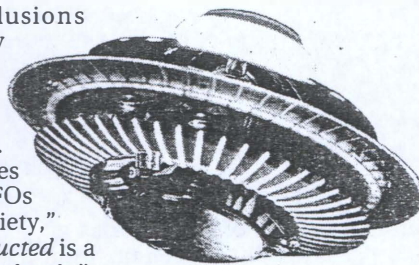
"This is junk social science, and there is a certain condescending quality to it," he said.

Jacobs, who said he has used "hypnotic regression" to recover memories from more than 900 alien abductees, said sleep paralysis, faulty hypnosis and false memories "simply do not account for the convincing details" in abductees' stories.

"All debunkers make one or more of the following mistakes: They ignore the data, they distort the data or they don't know the data," he said, describing himself as a "serious UFO researcher who believes the evidence is compelling that these events are happening more or less as (abductees) say."

Clancy said the volume and nasty tone of the hate mail she gets these days is far worse than what her research on sexual-abuse victims generated.

"I'm done with aliens," she said.



metro

MONDAY, MARCH 27, 2006

Mars Orbiter returns first images

SPACE The Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter Friday returned the first test images from its super high-resolution cameras, the most powerful photographic equipment to be trained on the Red Planet in NASA's search for water and life.

The black-and-white photos, taken by three cameras, show deep channels and layered surface debris around the planet's midsection, features that probably were formed by water, said Alfred McEwen, a mission scientist and University of Arizona professor of planetary science.

metro

TUESDAY, MARCH 7, 2006

Next solar cycle could be chaos

Sun-spawned cosmic storms that can play havoc with earthly power grids and orbiting satellites could be 50 per cent stronger in the next 11-year solar cycle than in the last one, scientists said yesterday.

The prediction, roughly resembling early predictions of a severe hurricane season on Earth, involves the number of sunspots on the solar surface, a phenomena monitored for more than 50 years. REUTERS

NATIONAL POST, DECEMBER 7, 2005

God's dirt

Who Designed The Designer,

There is a story that in the distant (or perhaps not so distant) future, scientists

decide to challenge God to a contest to create life. God accepts the challenge, picks up a handful of dirt and a squirming, hopping rabbit emerges. The scientist, undismayed, also pick up a handful of dirt; then God says, "Get your own dirt!"



WALTER HAUT
Issued news release in 1947

He made 1947 UFO blooper

Infamous Roswell report

ALBUQUERQUE (AP) — Army Lieut. Walter Haut, made famous for issuing a news release that said a flying saucer landed in Roswell, N.M., has died, his daughter, Julie Shuster, said. He was 83.

Haut, a former spokesman for Roswell Army Air Field, listened closely on July 8, 1947, as base commander Col. William Blanchard dictated a news release about a recovered flying saucer and ordered Haut to issue it.

Turned out to be weather balloon

The *Roswell Daily Record* newspaper ran a bold headline on July 9, 1947: RAAF Captures Flying Saucer on Ranch in Roswell Region.

The same day a statement was released saying it was only a weather balloon.

Haut, who died Thursday, said he never was told exactly where the flying disc reported in his news release was found nor did he ever see a UFO. But he remained a believer.

Haut and two other men founded The International UFO Museum in 1991. He was president of the museum until 1996. More than 2½ million people have visited it.

China closes Bigfoot park temporarily

SHANGHAI, China (AP) — China has temporarily closed parts of a nature reserve that attracts scores of people each year hunting for evidence of an ape-like Bigfoot creature, a park official said recently.

Sections of Shennongjia Nature Reserve will remain closed for at least three months to allow its natural attractions to recover from the wear and tear of visitors, said Wang Yong, an official from the park.

"During this period, we are going to do some research on

how to improve the attraction of Shennongjia," said Wang. Proposals included a possible airport in the area to facilitate tourist arrivals.

Located deep in the remote mountains of Hubei province, the park has long been rumoured as the home to the elusive creature known in Chinese as the "Yeren," or "Wild man."

Scientists say there is no scientific evidence the creature exists, but scores of people claim to have seen it roaming the park, about 1,075

km southwest of Beijing.

Sightings of a similar yeti-like creature have been reported in Tibet, though its existence hasn't been proven either.

China's government has previously urged tourist agencies to cut down on creature-hunting safaris in Shennongjia, saying they were misleading and could harm the environment.

However, the park itself has sought to lure tourists with a \$60,000 reward for the Yeren's capture.

metro

THURSDAY, JANUARY 12, 2006

Hubble telescope spots 'failed stars' for first time

Failed stars, baby stars and vast cosmic canyons of dust and gas were on display in a new Hubble Space Telescope image of the Orion Nebula released yesterday.

"Orion is a bustling cauldron of activity," Jennifer Wiseman of NASA said in a statement released with the image at an American Astronomical Society meeting.

The most eye-catching feature of the image may be the caverns of light where thousands of stars are forming. More than 3,000 stars of various sizes are apparent.

For the first time, Hubble was able to spot young brown dwarf stars — cool objects too small to be ordinary stars because they lack the ability to sustain nuclear fusion in their cores as the sun does. They are also known as failed stars.

Orion is a good place to study how stars are born because it is only 1,500 light-years away, a relative stone's throw in astronomical terms. A light-year is about 6 trillion miles, the distance light travels in a year.

The Hubble, the world's first space-based optical telescope, was deployed in 1990.

The image and more information are available online at <http://hubblesite.org/news/2006/01>.

REUTERS

24 HOURS • DEC. 16 -
DEC. 18, 2005

Manitoba is meteorite capital

The discovery of four new meteorites in 2005 makes it a record-setting year for recovering rocks from outer space in Canada and also confirms a University of Calgary scientist's belief that an extraordinary concentration of meteorites is located in southeastern Manitoba.

After becoming the first Canadian to discover two separate meteorites last summer, Winnipeg-based rock collector Derek Erstelle has now shattered the Canadian record by locating fragments of weathered iron that the Prairie Meteorite Search has shown to be another new meteorite from the bush near the Ontario border.

He found the newest specimen on a gravel bar of the Whiteshell River, east of Winnipeg.

- 24 hours news services

24 HOURS • FEBRUARY 21, 2006

Scope could glimpse creation

In a joint Mexico-U.S. scientific venture, builders are finishing a telescope on top of a volcano that will let astronomers look back 13 billion years and uncover secrets about the creation of the universe.

President Vicente Fox

and Mexico's scientific community have championed the construction of the telescope, the largest of its kind in the world, saying it shows how a developing country can play a major role in technology.

- The Associated Press

Scientists find Earth-like planet

WASHINGTON (Reuters) — Astronomers said yesterday they have detected the most Earth-like planet yet around a star other than our sun, raising hopes of finding a space rock that might support life.

"This is an important breakthrough in the quest to answer the question 'Are we alone?'" said Michael Turner of the National Science Foundation.

New technique

"The team has discovered the most Earth-like planet yet, and more importantly, has demonstrated the power of a new technique that is sensitive to detecting habitable planets."

In the last decade, astronomers have detected more than 160 planets orbiting stars

outside our solar system. The vast majority of these have been gas giant planets like Jupiter, which are hostile to life as it is known on Earth.

Frigid planet

But an international team has detected a cold planet about $5\frac{1}{2}$ times more massive than Earth — still small enough to be considered Earth-like — orbiting a star about 20,000 light-years away, close to the centre of the Milky Way.

A light-year is about 9 trillion kilometres.

To find this new planet — named OGLE-2005-BLG-390Lb — the team used a technique called gravitational microlensing. It uses a network of telescopes to watch for changes in light coming from distant stars.

NATIONAL POST, MONDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2005

By 2060, Canadians might no longer be able to admire one of the country's most beautiful natural phenomena. Scientists say by that time Earth's north magnetic pole could shift from Canada to Siberia, taking the northern lights with it. The phenomenon, triggered by the sun and fixed in position by the planet's magnetic field, is related to the movement of the north magnetic pole. The pole is the point on the Earth's surface where the magnetic field points straight down.

DOSE 224 MONDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2006

IS THERE LIFE IN SPACE?

PINK FLOYD SANG ABOUT IT. NOW A U.S. ASTRONOMER HAS IDENTIFIED 10 STARS TO SEARCH FOR SIGNS OF INTELLIGENT LIFE — AND NASA PLANS TO HAVE A LOOK

BORED OF YOUR neighbourhood? Why not try relocating to another solar system? An American astronomer has released a list of stars most likely to harbour intelligent life nearby, Reuters reports.

Margaret Turnbull of the Carnegie Institution in Washington, D.C., looked at size, age and composition to arrive at a Top 10 list of stars most likely to harbour extraterrestrial life. The stars will be the first targets of NASA's Terrestrial Planet Finder, a system of two orbiting observatories scheduled for launch by 2020.

"There are 400 billion stars in the galaxy and, obviously, we're not going to point the Terrestrial Planet Finder ... at every one of them," said Turnbull, who whittled down her list from a potential 17,000 stellar systems.

For stars to be considered, they had to be at least three

billion years old, not too gassy and devoid of massive companions whose gravity could interfere with the steady conditions needed for life to evolve.

NASA used to have a policy for what to do if intelligent life was ever discovered in outer space, but representatives from the independently funded Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence, set up after Washington cut funds to the NASA program, said private contributors would now probably be the first to know if aliens made contact.

Carol Cleland of the University of Colorado argued that astronomers are limiting themselves by looking for planets that closely resemble Earth.

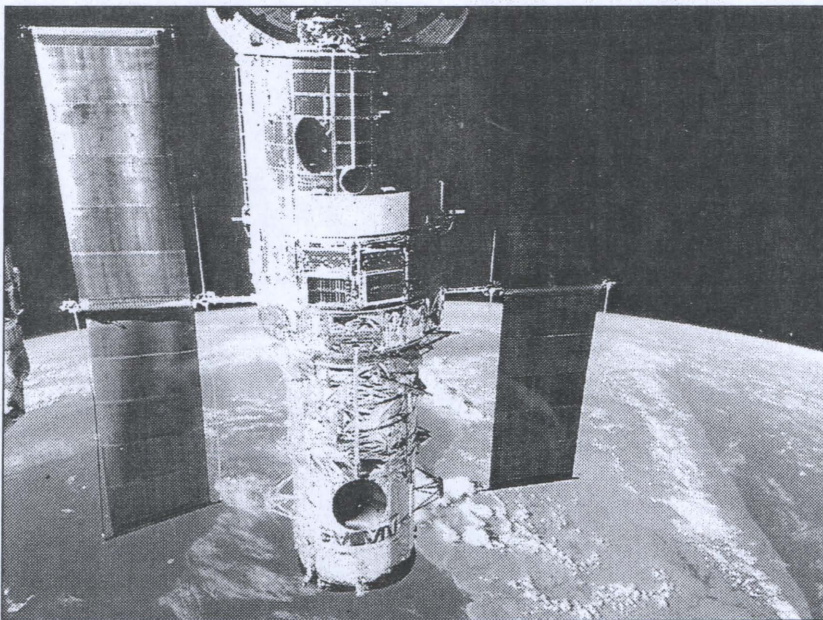
"I actually think we ought to be looking for life as we don't know it," Cleland said at a news conference.

— DOSE, REUTERS

PROPOSED TELESCOPE WOULD HAVE 100 TIMES THE POWER OF HUBBLE

Victoria Scientists at the University of Victoria are doing their part to probe deeper into space than ever before through an ambitious North America-wide project aimed at developing the world's largest telescope. Engineers, physicists and students make up a university team that is testing special components for the telescope, which is planned as a main mirror 30-metres in diameter, three times the current benchmark of 10 metres. That means it will dwarf such well-known predecessors as the Hubble telescope, pictured, and exceed Hubble's power by 100 times — resulting in a creation capable of peering 10 billion light years

into the skies. The new piece of equipment is the centrepiece of a \$750-million initiative called the TMT, or Thirty Metre Telescope project. It brings together universities from across Canada and the United States and is headquartered at California Institute of Technology. Funding is from a variety of public and private sources. The University of Victoria is sharing a \$4-million Canada Foundation for Innovation grant with the University of British Columbia and University of Toronto for their respective roles in the project. The telescope will not be in full operation for 10 to 15 years. *Jeff Bell, CanWest News Service*



AMONG THE TOP 10 ARE:

BETA CVN

51 PEGASUS

HD 10307

HD 211 415

18 SCO

Fewer UFOs spied in the sky

WINNIPEG (CP) — Aliens seem to be falling off the cultural radar.

Chris Rutkowski, an independent UFO researcher, says in his newly released 2005 report that sightings in Canada dropped dramatically from the year before.

"We're way down," Rutkowski said. "But despite that (Canada) recorded its second-highest number of sightings in a single year."

He said Canadians reported 769 sightings overall, a slight drop from 882 in 2004.

Ontario topped the 2005 list with 214, while no one in Nunavut saw flying saucers.

Calgary and Vancouver were the urban centres with the most sightings — 29 each.

"Most people aren't convinced these are spaceships," Rutkowski said. "Many have reasonable explanations."

But he said some reports just can't be explained, such as an Aug. 7 one from Vita, Man. Three people saw a silver missile-shaped object.

Witnesses told Rutkowski it wasn't a plane. "They said they've never seen anything like it before and anything since," he said, adding two people in Winnipeg saw a similar object the same day.

"It was hovering in the sky making no sound and it suddenly vanished after a short length of time."

SPACE

THE LAST FRONTIER

Space tourism has caught the imagination of U.S. business leaders, some of whom already have plans to serve what they say may be a multibillion-dollar industry in a couple of decades.

"Space tourism will be a significant portion of the overall travel and tourism industry over the next 20 to 25 years," said Eric Anderson, chief executive of Space Adventures, the first and still the only company to send paying customers into orbit.

Space Adventures owns the rights to sell an open third seat aboard Russian Soyuz spacecraft. A civilian willing to undergo rigorous training can spend 10 days on the International Space Station for US\$20-million.

"From the time you sign the contract, you can fly within a year," Anderson said.

In the next two years, the

firm plans to open a "spaceport" in the United Arab Emirates. There, the company plans to launch a sort of space plane with five passenger seats and a crew of one, built by a Russian company.

It will be launched from an airplane at 18,000 metres. After release, the spacecraft will ascend nearly vertically to 100 kilometres above the Earth, to the edge of space, allowing passengers to experience the effects of weightlessness for five to 10 minutes and to witness the blackness of space before descent.

"It's not a 10-day trip to the International Space Station, but it's available for only US\$100,000," Anderson said.

The space travel industry took off in 2004 with the success of SpaceShipOne, the first spacecraft developed and financed privately. At least three other companies, including Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic, are planning sub-orbital flights in the next few years. *Agence France-Presse*

Bulgarians were warned on Thursday by a Lunar Embassy to quickly buy real estate on the moon. "We have already had over 30 orders since we opened the embassy two days ago," Denislav Stoichev said. "A one-acre property on the moon will cost you 40 leva (\$24)," he added. The Plovdiv embassy is the first in Bulgaria but one of dozens around the world, licensed by the Galactic Government's CEO, U.S. entrepreneur Dennis Hope. In 1980, Mr. Hope proclaimed himself the owner of the moon and all planets and satellites in the solar system (except for the Earth), by exploiting a loophole in the 1967 UN Outer Space Treaty, which states space property "is not subject to national appropriation" but says nothing about private or corporate owners. The late Pope John Paul II, former U.S. president Nixon and NASA officials are also owners of moon plots, Mr. Stoichev said. *Reuters*

A Canadian geoscientist has invented a *Star Trek*-style "tricorder" — his own word — that can scan the surface of planets and identify the rocks without having to stop and grind up pieces in a lab. It can also analyze plants, animals and probably other materials. The hand-held device will be ready for NASA's next Mars lander, a robotic mission to be launched in 2009. It shines a laser beam at a

rock sample, which "excites" the atoms in the rock. The atoms then give off a weak light in a wavelength unique to each type of rock. All the tricorder needs is an internal catalogue to tell it which wavelength comes from a diamond and which comes from cubic zirconia. The tricorder is the brainchild of Bob Downs, a native of B.C. and a professor at the University of Arizona. *CanWest News Service*

UFO-Spotters Tell Tales of the Extra-Terrestrial

LIMA, Peru (Reuters) - One minute Jonathan Reed was hiking with his golden retriever in a forest in Seattle. The next, his pet was being torn apart by a "gray" -- an alien being with an elongated head, smelling of rotting fruit. A scene from a sci-fi film? No, maintains Reed, a former child-developmental psychologist who says he took the alien home and lived with it for nine days in which it communicated via telepathy and was able to pull thoughts from his mind.

NASA unveils probe findings

LOS ANGELES — The Deep Impact space probe found the first evidence that comets carry ice, raising the possibility comets may have delivered life-giving water to a primeval Earth, NASA scientists said yesterday.

Blue ring

Astronomers have discovered a hitherto overlooked blue ring around Uranus. Most rings around the planets Saturn and Uranus appear red, because of the size of the particles in the rings. But scientists, who've scanned the rings in the infrared light spectrum, failed to notice the outer Uranus ring until now because the fineness of its particles made the ring invisible.

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TORONTO ONTARIO
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Big Bang 'inflation'

BOSTON (AP) — Physicists announced yesterday they can now prove the big bang expanded the universe from the size of a marble to a volume larger than all of observable space in less than a trillion-trillionth of a second.

The discovery — which involves an analysis of variations in the brightness of microwave radiation — is the first evidence to support the two-decade-old theory that the universe went through what is called inflation.

It also helps explain how matter eventually clumped together into planets, stars and galaxies in a universe that began as a remarkably smooth, superhot soup.

"It's giving us our first clues

about how inflation took place," said Michael Turner, an assistant director at the National Science Foundation. "This is absolutely amazing."

Brian Greene, a Columbia University physicist, said: "The observations are spectacular and the conclusions stunning."

"It amazes me that we can say anything at all about what transpired in the first trillionth of a second of the universe," said Charles Bennett, a Johns Hopkins University physicist who announced the discovery at a news conference at Princeton University.

The measurements are to be published in a future issue of the *Astrophysical Journal*.

metro

TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 2006

'Super-Earth' discovered

A cold, heavy "super-Earth" has been found orbiting a distant star, using a method that holds promise for detecting faraway planets that closely resemble our own, astronomers said yesterday in Washington.

The planet weighs 13 times as much as Earth and is orbiting a star about 9,000 light-years away. A light-year is about 6 trillion miles.

The discovery is billed as a super-Earth because it is thought to be a rocky, terrestrial planet like Earth, even though it is much more massive.

REUTERS

metro

THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 2006

Look underground for life on Mars

SPACE To learn if Mars ever supported life, researchers should look underground, says a scientist on results of the Mars Express mission.

The European Space Agency's orbiter has mapped most of the planet for minerals that bear chemical fingerprints of past encounters with water and found less than 1 per cent of the planet's surface show evidence it can sustain life.

Mars Orbiter • THE EPOCH TIMES

APRIL 5, 2006

'At this point we have an idea that water is probably abundant on Mars in the form of ice.'

— Alfred McEwen,
University of Arizona

LOS ANGELES (Reuters)—The Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter on Friday returned the first test images from its super high-resolution cameras, the most powerful photographic equipment to be trained on the Red Planet in NASA's search for water and life.

The black-and-white photos, taken by three cameras, show deep channels and layered surface debris around the planet's midsection, features that probably were formed by water, said Alfred McEwen, a mission scientist and University of Arizona professor of planetary science.

The images were taken from an altitude of 1,547 miles above the surface, about three times higher than the orbiter will be when it formally begins its science mission in November.

The spacecraft, which reached orbit on March 10, is to map about 1 per cent of the Martian surface for future landings by robotic probes and human astronauts.

The resolution of the test images is comparable to those captured by the less powerful cameras of three other

orbiters circling Mars, but the tests show that cameras survived the seven-month space trip that began in August.

NASA scientists will use the images to calibrate the cameras, and will later combine the images to create broader view and to add color. They are available for viewing at www.jpl.nasa.gov.

Over the next seven months, the orbiter will "aerobrake," dipping into Mars' atmosphere and gradually changing its elliptical orbit into a near-circle about 185 miles above the planet's surface. In the lower orbit, scientists will be able to distinguish surface objects as small as 3 feet wide, McEwen said.

The Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter has a suite of onboard instruments to map the planet's subsurface minerals, monitor its atmosphere and look for evidence of subsurface ice or water.

"At this point we have an idea that water is probably abundant on Mars in the form of ice," McEwen said. "It's not a matter of finding water on Mars but learning its importance in climate change ... and clearly it has been important to shaping the landscape."

The orbiter's first mission is to find landing sites for the Phoenix Mars Lander, set to arrive on Mars in May 2008 to dig for subsurface water ice, and for the 2009 arrival of the Mars Science Laboratory, a larger version of the twin robotic geologists Spirit and Opportunity, which have been traversing the planet's surface since 2004.

The Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter has the most advanced and powerful instruments of any of the four science satellites circling the planet and will return more than 10 times the quantity of data than all other probes combined, McEwen said.

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SATURDAY SUN APRIL 8, 2006

Beware monster bunny

LONDON — It sounds like a job for Wallace and Gromit. A "monster" rabbit has been rampaging through vegetable patches in a village in northern England, infuriating gardeners. In a plot similar to animated film *Wallace & Gromit in the Curse of the Were-Rabbit*, angry horticulturists in Felton, near Newcastle, have posted an armed guard to protect their cabbages and parsnips.

TORONTO SUN THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 2006

Scientists surprised to see planet forming around pulsar

WASHINGTON (Reuters) — Planets outside our solar system might form, phoenix-like, from the debris circling a dead star known as a pulsar, researchers reported yesterday after finding the makings for a planet near such a body.

This could mean that planet formation could be more common than previously thought, said Deepto Chakrabarty of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

"What's remarkable here is this

process of planet formation, which we associate with the birth of stars, seems to also be able to occur at the end of the stellar lifetime, sort of a renaissance of the system," he said.

Most planets are thought to form around young stars, like the sun, from debris left over when the star formed.

However, research by Chakrabarty and his colleagues found a disk around a pulsar, the remnant from a spent star.

Using NASA's Spitzer Space Telescope the team spied the disk around a pulsar about 13,000 light-years from Earth, in the constellation Cassiopeia.

Chakrabarty said: "No one had ever seen a disk around a pulsar, around an old dead star."

A pulsar is the densest known object in the universe, packing the mass of a sun-like star into a ball about 16 km across. A single teaspoon would weigh 2 billion tons.

TORONTO SUN WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5, 2006

Aliens lands pilot on CW

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) — The new CW network, which will rise from the ashes of the WB and UPN this fall, has given a pilot order to the comedy *Aliens In America*.

SATURDAY SUN APRIL 1, 2006

Bernard Shaw was right when he wrote, "When extraterrestrial beings land on earth they will instantly declare it a lunatic asylum."

So my congratulations to 89-year old Mary Campbell in Vancouver.

metro

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2006

Galaxy photo turning heads

Using the Hubble Space Telescope and the Canada-France-Hawaii observatory atop Mauna Kea, Hawaii, scientists have pieced together the largest, most detailed snapshot ever compiled of a distant spiral galaxy.

Released today by NASA, the photograph shows a face-on view of Messier 101, also known as the Pinwheel Galaxy, as it spins out over more than 170,000 light-years, with an estimated 1 trillion stars. "I think it's the most interesting image ever done," says K.D. Kuntz, an astronomer with the NASA Goddard Space Flight Centre.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



NASA/JPL-Caltech/University of Arizona

FIRST IMAGE: The first image of Mars taken by the High Resolution Imaging Science Experiment camera (HiRISE) on NASA's Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter. The image was a test taken from an altitude of 1,547 miles. By fall 2006 images will be taken from an altitude of about 174 miles and have a resolution of 11 inches per pixel.

TORONTO SUN WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 2006

Talk about a moonshot
CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — Cosmonaut Pavel Vinogradov hopes to hit a gold-plated golf ball during an August spacewalk from the International Space Station.

The ball, equipped with a tracking device, is expected to remain in orbit for years. It's a publicity stunt for Element 21 Golf, a Toronto golf club manufacturer.

TORONTO SUN THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2005

Chinese eye the moon

BEIJING — China will begin an effort to send astronauts to the moon in about 2017, with a landing some time after that, a senior space agency official told state media yesterday. The moon landing would cap a lunar program begun in 2004 with the launch of a probe.

THE EPOCH TIMES •
NOVEMBER 2, 2005

Alien Abductees Prone to False Memories - Expert

LONDON (Reuters) - Do you have memories of being abducted by aliens and whisked away in a spaceship? You wouldn't be alone.

NATIONAL POST, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 2006

SEARCHING THE SKIES

New telescope designed to look for light signals from extraterrestrials

A Massachusetts observatory yesterday unveiled a powerful new telescope designed to capture light signals transmitted by extraterrestrials. The telescope is the first to be developed solely for that purpose and will be able to cover 100,000 times the amount of sky covered by current equipment, its developers said. "The opening of this telescope repre-



metro

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 2006

NASA will send probe to crash into moon

NASA plans to send a two-ton probe crashing into a crater on the moon in hopes of discovering if it harbors water that could be used for manned missions, the U.S. space agency said yesterday.

The \$73 million probe, to be built by Northrop Grumman Corp., is set to be launched in 2008 aboard a rocket also carrying a sophisticated lunar map-

first missions

▶ NASA astronauts visited the moon during the late 1960s and early 1970s but have not returned.

"We're going to learn a lot from this," said program manager Dan Andrews of NASA's Ames Research Center in Moffett Field, California. "It's going to give us a real definitive understanding of what we have up there."

Water ice could be used to make oxygen for astronauts to breathe, as well as an oxidizer for rocket fuel.

REUTERS

NATIONAL POST, FRIDAY, MARCH 10, 2006

SATURN MOON 'MIGHT BE LIFE'S DISTANT OUTPOST'

BY CHRIS DOLMETSCH

The surface of Saturn's moon Enceladus is composed mostly of ice and there may be a cold ocean beneath that holds some form of life, the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration announced yesterday.

Images taken by NASA's Cassini spacecraft last year show a plume of gases and water spouting from the moon's southern pole, similar to the Old Faithful geyser in Yellowstone National Park in the western United States, NASA said.

"We realize that this is a radical conclusion — that we may have evidence for liquid water within a body so small and so cold," said Carolyn Porco, Cassini imaging team leader at the Space Science Institute in Boulder, Colo.

"However, if we are right, we have significantly broadened the diversity of solar system environments where we might possibly have conditions suitable for living organisms."

Other moons, such as Jupiter's Europa, have oceans covered by ice more than a kilometre thick. Enceladus's plume shows that water may be as close as 10 metres underground, "like cold versions of the Old Faithful geyser," NASA said.

"Any life that existed could not be luxuriant and would have to deal with low temperatures, feeble metabolic energy and per-

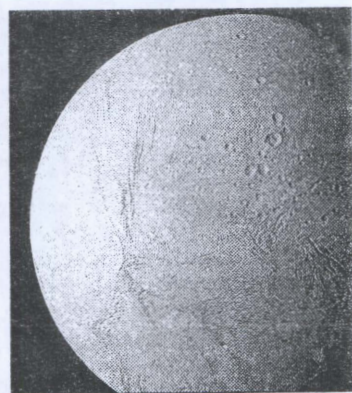
haps a severe chemical environment," said Jeffrey Kargel of the University of Arizona in an article published in today's edition of the journal *Science*. "Nevertheless, we cannot discount the possibility that Enceladus might be life's distant outpost."

Enceladus, the sixth-largest of Saturn's 47 moons, was discovered by astronomer William Herschel in 1789. It has a diameter of about 500 kilometres, smaller than France and orbits Saturn about every 1.4 days. The Cassini spacecraft, which has been circling the planet since July 2004, flew by the moon three times between February and July of 2005.

The plume likely spews water, which breaks down into oxygen and hydrogen that travels thousands of kilometres into Saturn's atmosphere, where it helps to replenish the planet's E ring. Some of the material may fall back to the surface of the moon as snow.

Scientists concluded last year Enceladus had a "significant" atmosphere full of electrically charged water vapour after analyzing data from Cassini's magnetometer instrument taken during the first two flybys, suggesting an underground source of gases close to the surface.

Bloomberg News, with files from Agence France-Presse



AFP / NASA

Space probe images of Saturn's moon Enceladus indicate water.

sents one of those rare moments in a field of scientific endeavour when a great leap forward is enabled," said Bruce Betts of the Planetary Society, a group in Pasadena, Calif., that funded the telescope's development. "Sending laser signals across the cosmos would be a very logical way for E.T. to reach out, but until now we have been ill-equipped to receive any such signal." Reuters

Harrison Hot Springs a hotbed of Big Foot sightings

SUSAN POIZNER
Special to the Sun

HARRISON LAKE, B.C. — It's Saturday morning and I'm soaking in the healing, mineral-rich waters of Harrison Hot Springs Resort and Spa — a luxurious heritage hotel on the banks of Harrison Lake in British Columbia (harrisonresort.com).

Just two hours' drive from Vancouver, this establishment in the tiny town of Harrison Hot Springs (harrison.ca) has attracted visitors for almost a century.

One of the main attractions is the opportunity to enjoy the naturally warm hot spring pools. Fine dining, dancing and live music in the resort's 1950s-style dining room is also a draw.

But I'm not just here to satisfy my hedonistic desires. I'm here on a mission: I want to learn about the Sasquatch — a mythical creature that is said to roam in the surrounding mountains. The earliest sightings of the Sasquatch go back thousands of years.

After relaxing in the hot springs, I join Willie and Kelsey Charlie, members of the local Chehalis First Nations community, at the nearby public boat docks.

Their innovative company, Sasquatch Tours, (sasquatchtours.com) takes visitors on cruises to explore the

wildlife and cultural sites in and around Harrison Lake and river.

"There's so little knowledge of our traditions and our beliefs," Willie explains.

"There's been so much development in the last 15 years and a lot of our people's sacred sites have been destroyed. One of our goals is to share the knowledge, history and teachings and to bring awareness of these sites, so they might be protected and preserved in the future."

After sharing a welcome song — traditional aboriginal singing accompanied by handmade drums — the brothers bring us to places where their people carved or painted images over two thousand years ago.

Hidden in sheltered parts of the rock surrounding the lake, the images are still vibrant. We see pictures of a wolf, of a traditional burial. We see images of man, illustrated with a large head and a stick figure body.

And then we see the image of the Sasquatch painted in red ochre.

"You can see he's not depicted like a human," Willie explains. "He has a big hairy head, big hands and big feet. Many think he's just a big creature like a hairy ape. We believe he's a supernatural being. Some say he can vanish. We believe he has the ability to go from the physical



CLIFF CHANGOOR PHOTO

Brothers and Sasquatch Tours founders Willie, left, and Kelsey Charlie on their boat in Harrison Lake, B.C.

world into the spiritual world and back. So to us he's a spiritual being."

Willie's brother Kelsey is one of the many locals who claim to have seen this elusive creature. At the time he was working in the family and child services field and had to visit a remote home in the

forest when he and a non-aboriginal colleague saw two Sasquatch — a mother and a child — drinking water from a creek.

"I asked my colleague: 'Are you seeing what I'm seeing?' and she says 'Yes! Of course I am!' I've lived here all my life. I've sometimes heard the Sas-

quatch when I was fishing. But I never thought I would ever actually see one!"

During our tour, I didn't have the opportunity to see a real Sasquatch. But I did learn about the richness of the local aboriginal traditions.

I saw majestic bald eagles. I marvelled at the beauty of a

sparkling lake surrounded by ancient forests and seemingly untouched by cottagers. I witnessed the blessing of unspoiled nature.

May this type of tourism ensure that it remains that way for many years to come...

susan.poizner@sympatico.ca

SCIENTIST SEEKS REMAINS OF 10-FOOT APE IN THAI JUNGLE

*Gigantopithecus
blackii* a cousin
of *Homo sapiens*

BY RANDY BOSWELL

A Canadian scientist is set to embark on a cave-to-cave search in the jungles of Thailand for ancient remains of the biggest ape ever to walk the Earth: *Gigantopithecus blackii*, a 10-foot-tall, 1,200-pound cousin of *Homo sapiens* that is now known to have lived alongside our primate ancestors in southeast Asia 100,000 years ago.

McMaster University geologist Jack Rink, a global expert in discerning the ages of prehistoric objects, has discovered that a set of teeth from the giant ape — one of only a handful of *Gigantopithecus* artifacts known to science — came from a relatively recent and pivotal era for human beings.

"A missing piece of the puzzle has always focused on pinpointing when *Gigantopithecus* existed," Mr. Rink says. "This is a primate that co-existed with humans at a time when humans were undergoing a major evolutionary change. Guangxi province in southern China, where the *Gigantopithecus* fossils were found, is the same region where some believe the modern human race originated."

Now, the adventurous professor is determined to find more bones from the creature that — despite its extinction eons ago — has long inspired Bigfoot enthusiasts, many of whom are convinced that members of the species have somehow survived to the present day.

Mr. Rink's research breakthrough on the real beast followed years of work in China at a cave with the world's richest deposits of "*Giganto*" remains.

Only four sets of the ape's lower jaw have been found worldwide — in China, India and Vietnam. But from that scanty collection of strikingly large teeth and mandibles, scientists have been able to

extrapolate the overall physiology and stature of a gargantuan ape that was up to one-third taller and seven times heavier than the average modern man.

"The size of these specimens — the crown of the molar, for instance, measures about an inch across — helped us understand the extraordinary size of the primate," Mr. Rink says.

Giganto remains are so rare that Asian paleontologists have never allowed direct dating techniques that could destroy bone samples. But by analyzing the teeth of other long-extinct mammal species found in the same layers of soil as the giant ape — including stegodon, an elephant ancestor — Mr. Rink was able to determine that *Gigantopithecus* was still living as recently as 100,000 years ago.

"No one had suspected it was that young," Mr. Rink said yesterday, days before his planned trek to northern Thailand to examine 11 newly discovered caves in mountainous terrain that closely matches other known *Giganto* habitats.

A team of French archeologists has invited Mr. Rink to scour the sites for traces of the giant ape or its hominid contemporary, *Homo erectus*. He says it's "almost certain" that *Giganto* would have inhabited the region because of its similarity and proximity to the places where other remains were found.

"It's a rich area," Mr. Rink said. "But it's very hard to speculate about what you might find until you're on the ground."

Scientists have been debating the demise of *Gigantopithecus blackii* since 1935, when a Dutch paleontologist discovered the first huge, human-like molar at a Hong Kong market that was selling bones for traditional Chinese medicines.

Some have suggested that competition with prehistoric humans doomed the giant apes. But Mr. Rink believes the two species occupied distinct ecological niches, a theory backed by microscopic scratches on *Giganto* teeth that have determined their staple food was bamboo — something our ancestors could not digest.

CanWest News Service



Possible 10th planet bigger than Pluto?

A distant object discovered in space last year which could be the 10th planet in our solar system is around a third bigger than Pluto, German astrophysicists said yesterday.

They determined the diameter of the potential new planet, known as 2003 UB313, by measuring its thermal emission.

"We actually measured the size of UB313 which was not known prior to these observations," said Professor Frank Bertoldi of the University of Bonn and the Max Planck Institute for Radio Astronomy in Germany, who headed the research team.

According to their calculations it has a diameter of 3,000 km, about 700 km big-

ger than Pluto, which would make it the largest solar system object found since the discovery of Neptune in 1846.

"Since UB313 is decidedly larger than Pluto, it is now increasingly hard to justify calling Pluto a planet if UB313 is not also given this status," Bertoldi added.

The International Astronomical Union will decide if UB313, found by Professor Mike Brown and his colleagues at the California Institute of Technology, is a planet. No date has been set for a decision.

Although the size of UB313 is known, what it is made of is not, a factor that is important in determining planet status.

REUTERS

MACLEAN'S FEB. 20 '06

Our galaxy sucks

The Milky Way galaxy may have pulled one million stars from the Messier 12 globular cluster in the Ophiuchus constellation. Clusters like Messier 12 usually show the smallest and most common size of stars, but that formation's small stars were missing, making it unique in the Milky Way's 200 clusters.

MACLEAN'S DEC. 19 '05

It's big, it's coming

NASA believes that a 390-m-wide asteroid has an outside chance of hitting the Earth in 2036. The asteroid was discovered last year and is rated four out of 10 on the Torino scale of impact probability. On an even grander scale, the entire Milky Way galaxy, in which the Earth resides, is moving toward the Andromeda Nebula, although any collision wouldn't take place for four billion years.



MACLEAN'S MAR. 20 '06

All-time high

Scientists at Sandia National Laboratories in New Mexico have created the highest temperatures ever made by humans: two billion kelvins. By comparison, thermonuclear explosions only achieve temperatures in the tens to hundreds of millions. The temperatures were achieved using a "Z machine," which involves the release of 20 million amps of electricity onto an array of steel wires. The wires dissolve into a gas that collapses, producing the energy which, as in nuclear reactions, is greater than the energy used.